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THE SITUATION IN BURUNDI

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 16 May 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement issued on 7 May 1997 by the Presidency of the European Union on Burundi.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 43, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) N. H. BIEGMAN
Permanent Representative of the
Netherlands to the United Nations

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ANNEX

[Original: English and French]

Declaration issued on 7 May 1997 by the Presidency of the European Union on Burundi

The European Union welcomes the outcome of the summit meeting of regional Heads of State in Arusha on 16 April 1997 and confirms its support for their efforts. Its special envoy will continue to work in close collaboration with them.

The European Union condemns the atrocities committed daily against civilians and other violations of human rights. In that context, it has learned with consternation of the recent violence in the provinces of Makamba and Bururi, and in particular of the massacre of 43 seminarists and staff members at the seminary in Buta carried out by armed rebels on 30 April this year.

It totally condemns that massacre and offers its condolences to the families of the victims and to those in charge of the seminary.

The European Union believes that such acts of violence, by whomsoever they are committed, seriously undermine the peace process in Burundi, and therefore calls on all the parties in the conflict to renounce violence, publicly to repudiate the acts of violence committed daily in Burundi and resolutely to pursue a political settlement.

The European Union solemnly appeals to all Burundian leaders not to let themselves be tempted by the illusion of a military victory. It reiterates its appeal for a ceasefire and an immediate and unconditional start on negotiations amongst all parties to the conflict in Burundi.

It also reiterates its concern at the humanitarian situation in the "regroupement" camps and appeals to the Burundian Government to disperse those camps at the earliest opportunity.